

**SUMMARY OF THE
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 20, 2000**

The Proficiency Testing Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference, on Tuesday, June 20, 2000. The meeting was led by its chair, Ms. Barbara Burmeister of the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene. *The main purpose of this meeting was to review issues to be addressed at the Sixth NELAC Annual Meeting (NELAC VI) in Williamsburg, VA.*

MINUTES AND STATUS OF ACTION ITEMS FROM MAY 30, 2000 TELECONFERENCE

Ms. Burmeister reviewed the minutes from the teleconference on May 30, 2000. The committee agreed that the minutes are final. The status of the Action Items is as follows:

- C Ms. Burmeister sent a request for a waiver to the NELAC Board of Directors (BoD) requesting that Mr. Matt Caruso be allowed to remain as a member of the PT Committee for one more year.
- C Ms. Anne Rhyne did not have an opportunity to bring up the matter of the BoD approving new PTPA/PTOBs at the BoD meeting of June 8, 2000.
- C Mr. Chuck Wibby completed the Proficiency Testing (PT)-Field of Testing (FOT) errata sheet.
- C Mr. Wibby completed a draft letter to the National Institute Standards and Technology (NIST)/National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) regarding oversight of the PT program.
- C Mr. Matt Caruso drafted language for Section 2.7.2 regarding initial and continuing accreditation.
- C Ms. Cindy Nettrour sent an e-mail to Ms. Irene Ronning regarding liaison with the Membership and Outreach Committee.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As noted above, Ms. Burmeister submitted a request for a waiver to the BoD requesting that Mr. Caruso be allowed to remain as a member of the PT Committee for one more year. She has not received a response as of this time.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

Changes to Chapter 2 And Appendices

The contractor has still not put the original Section 2.3.1 back in the NELAC Standard. Therefore, this section is included in the "Changes to the Changes" list of June 12, 2000, and is now numbered 2.3.2. Other items in the "Changes to the Changes" list were reviewed by the Committee and found to be

acceptable. Ms. Burnmeister will make copies of this list for distribution at the NELAC VI meeting of the PT Committee.

It was noted that Dr. Marcia Davies, chair of the Program Policy and Structure Committee, is not going to change the “Scope of Accreditation” in Chapter 1 of the NELAC Standard. Mr. Caruso noted that the PT Committee could propose that a change be made to Chapter 1 from the floor at NELAC VI. The PT Committee will work with those responsible for Chapter 1 in an attempt to find mutually acceptable language for Chapters 1 and 2. The PT Committee will propose to add “method” to Chapter 2, even if nothing is done in Chapter 1.

PT-FOT Errata Sheet

The PT-FOT Errata sheet completed by Mr. Chuck Wibby was found by the PT Committee to be acceptable. The list will be posted on the NELAC Website.

In another matter, Mr. Bob Graves has requested that analyte numbers be added to the PT-FOT table. Mr. Wibby noted that this is being done at this time.

In a final matter, Ms. Jane Jensen suggested that 50 to 1600 cfu’s/100mL be acceptable for CWA micro samples and the committee accepted this recommendation. Mr. Wibby noted that he has reviewed all the analyte data and generated acceptance criteria for every analyte. All final values appear to be satisfactory.

Update on PTOB/PTPA Designation Issue

As noted, Ms. Rhyne did not have an opportunity to bring up the Proficiency Testing Oversight Board (PTOB)/Proficiency Test Provider Accreditor (PTPA) issue up at the meeting of the BoD. Ms. Burnmeister will bring up this issue at the BoD meeting at NELAC VI.

Finalize Letter to NIST/NVLAP

The draft of the letter to be sent to NIST/NVLAP regarding oversight of providers completed by Mr. Wibby was found to be acceptable by the committee. Some members of the committee noted that not all providers are following the NELAC PT Standard, and that NIST has done nothing about this as of this time. Apparently no one is policing the standards being produced.

Mr. Wibby noted that the 11 NELAP states (Accrediting Authorities [AAs]) are acting as effective PTOB/PTPAs through their process of accepting providers. However, agreement between the AAs on criteria for this acceptance is needed for reciprocity to be valid. Mr. Caruso noted that some AAs are looking carefully at the PT levels to see if they are consistent with the NELAC PT Standard; others are only concerned with pass/fail results of the analyses. The AAs need to be encouraged to police the standards being provided to assure compliance with the NELAC PT Standard. Also, Mr. Caruso noted that being outside the NELAC PT designated range may not always be a problem.

Report to the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB)

Issues to be reported to ELAB by Ms. Burmeister include 1) the PT-FOT Errata sheet has been completed and will be submitted for posting on the NELAC Website, 2) neither a national data base nor a PT database has been completed as of this time, and 3) no PT caucus for providers has been scheduled, and that one is needed. Such a meeting would allow stakeholders to resolve PT issues, for example, the requirement to measure pH with both WP and WS samples.

Membership and Outreach Committee Update

Ms. Cindy Nettrour notified Ms. Irene Ronning of the Membership and Outreach Committee that she will serve as the PT Committee liaison with this committee and will attend the Membership and Outreach meeting at NELAC VI.

OTHER ITEMS OR ISSUES

Agenda for NELAC VI

The agenda for the PT Committee meeting at NELAC VI was reviewed. Presentation responsibilities for committee members were also reviewed. Big issues will be 1) the performance of the current PTOB/PTPA and the need for additional PTOB/PTPAs and 2) fields of testing.

Comments and Questions About Chapter 2

Ms. Burmeister is responding to comments and questions about Chapter 2. She will complete preparing and submitting these responses before the NELAC VI meeting.

ACTION ITEMS
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 20, 2000

Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1.	Ms. Burmeister will prepare copies of the “Changes to the Changes” for distribution at the NELAC VI meeting.	06/26/00
2.	The completed PT-FOT errata sheet will be submitted for placement on the NELAC web site.	07/10/00
3.	Ms. Burmeister will send the finalized letter to NIST/NVLAP that addresses PT Committee concerns about performance as a PTOB/PTPA.	06/20/00
4.	Ms. Burmeister will complete responses to comments and questions.	06/26/00

**PARTICIPANTS
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 30, 2000**

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